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The nature and importance of self-regulation in early childhood: Factor structure and predictive validity

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Abstract

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promote actions oriented at dropout and job search without professional qualifications.

118. The nature and importance of self-regulation in early childhood: Factor structure and predictive validity

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Self-regulation is defined as a “child’s ability to modulate behaviours according to the cognitive, emotional and social demands of a particular situation” (Calkins & Fox, 2002, p. 479). Aspects of sustained effort and absence of immediate rewards have also been included in the definition of self-regulation. The ability for the child to self-regulate has been shown to enable the undertaking of a complex array of cognitive, behavioural and social tasks; associated with academic achievement and social and emotional competence in primary through into secondary school. Within the literature, the different components of self-regulation (i.e., behavioural, social, emotional, cognitive) are used interchangeably in the identification of self-regulation. This has led to a lack of clarity of the construct, obscuring an understanding of its nature and development. As a consequence of these various conceptualisations, the extent to which self-regulation is a unified or multiplicity of related abilities remains unclear. The paper presents findings from the exploration of the

components of self-regulation and the predictive validity of the identified factors in relation to children’s academic, social and emotional outcomes. Analyses were conducted on data from the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC), which followed 10,090 children and their families longitudinally, from birth to adolescence. The factor structure of self-regulatory abilities and the predictive validity of factors generated were evaluated in the LSAC study’s two cohorts (from birth: $n = 5,107$; from kindergarten: $n = 4,983$). Results of these analyses identified multiple distinct, yet related, self-regulation factors (supporting the ‘diversity’ of self-regulatory functions). Additionally, these factors predicted children’s later academic, social and emotional development in the primary and early adolescent years. The paper clarifies the nature and development of self-regulation, and provides further evidence on its role in the longer-term development of children through to early adolescence.

187. Children’s development in transition from preschool to elementary school

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The present work is interested in the processes that occur in the life-course of children education, specifically in the pass of preschool to elementary school. We assume that qualified preschool